

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
OFFICE OF INTEGRATED CARE**

**Common Errors in the Healthy Way L.A. (HWLA)
Referral Tracking System (RTS)**

Error #1: “Date of Initial Appointment” does not reflect the first appointment offered to the client

The “Date of Initial Appointment” field should list the date of the first appointment offered to the client for a face-to-face visit. This does not include an appointment solely to complete administrative activities such as financial screening.

If the client refuses the first appointment date offered and chooses a later date, misses the appointment, or calls to re-schedule, DO NOT change the “Date of Initial Appointment” field. Simply select the appropriate disposition. You also have the option of noting the new appointment date in the “Referral Comments.”

Error #2: A date is entered in the “Date of Initial Appointment” field, even though it took 2+ weeks to reach the client

The “Date of Initial Appointment” field should be left blank if you are unable to offer an initial appointment to the client within 30 business days because it takes several attempts/weeks to contact the person. You have the option of using the Final Disposition drop-down to track whether the client was ever contacted and if they came in for services.

Scenario	Initial Appt. Date	Initial Appt. Provider Number	Disposition	Response Faxed Date	Final Disposition*	Final Disposition Date
Referral received 10/22/12, unable to reach the client to schedule an appointment for 2 – 3 weeks. Finally reached the client and scheduled an initial appointment 7 weeks after the referral date.		0001	Unable to reach individual	11/19/12	Individual accepted for DMH services	12/11/12

*The Final Disposition field is currently “locked” if there isn’t an initial appointment date entered; this is being fixed.

Error #3: “Disposition of Initial Appointment” is entered incorrectly

The “Disposition of Initial Appointment” field should reflect the outcome of the initial appointment listed in the “Date of Initial Appointment” field. This means:

- There should **always** be a disposition (typically within 30 days of the referral) and it should **never** be “Other.” If you have a scenario that does not fit one of the existing options, e-mail HWLA@dmh.lacounty.gov. We can assist in selecting the best Disposition or add a new one.

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- A Disposition should never be entered until after the date entered in the “Date of Initial Appointment” field, unless the individual called to re-schedule or cancel the appointment.
- The disposition of “Individual accepted for DMH services” is not related to whether your agency accepts the referral. “Individual accepted for DMH services” means that the individual is now receiving services from your agency.

Error #4: The “Provider # Associated with Initial Appointment” field is left blank

There should **always** be a Provider Number listed in the “Provider # Associated with Initial Appointment” if the client has been assigned to a mental health provider. There are many Agencies with more than one provider site so a Provider Number should be entered for each referral.

Error #5: The “Date Referral Response returned to referring provider” is left blank

Following completion of the initial evaluation, DMH providers should complete the Department of Mental Health Referral Response form. The original Referral Response form should be given to the referring PCP while a copy of the form is retained in the DMH Clinical Record. The “Date Referral Response returned to referring provider” cannot be earlier than the date of the initial appointment.

The response date should be recorded in the RTS in order to “close” the referral record. Referrals without a response date will start to show on the RTS User’s homepage after 45 calendar days as a reminder.

If the individual was not referred by a PCP then the Referral Response form is not required. A date must still be listed in the field in order to “close” the referral. The date the Disposition was entered is often the most appropriate.

Error #6: Mishandling referrals that need to be transferred to another mental health provider (due to client needing Tier 1 services, a specialty language, geographic need, etc.)

1. If the provider determined they need to transfer the individual **BEFORE** a face-to-face assessment, the provider can use the Transfer function in the RTS to send the referral to the Service Area Navigator or another provider.
2. If the provider determined they need to transfer the individual **DURING** a face-to-face assessment, the provider will enter the disposition as “Individual does not meet program criteria; referred for outpatient mental health services.”
3. If the provider determined they need to transfer the individual **AFTER** a face-to-face assessment, the provider will leave the disposition as “Individual accepted for DMH services.”